

REMARKS/DISCUSSION OF ISSUES

Claims 1-11 are pending in the application. Claims 1-11 are rejected. Claims 1 and 2 have been amended.

Applicant thanks the Examiner for acknowledging the claim for priority and the lack of receipt of any certified copies of the priority document(s).

Claims 1 through 11 stand finally rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hitachi (EP 0 768 352 A1).

Claim 2 has been amended to correct a typographical error.

The Examiner states that the method of claim 1 does not require the addition of silica particles to the reaction mixture, and therefore reads on the *in situ* formation of silica particles.

Claim 1 has been amended to call for the step of adding silica particles to the reaction mixture. Support for this amendment may be found, inter alia, in the paragraph beginning at line 7 on page 2 of Applicant's specification.

The Examiner asserts that Hitachi teaches the addition of silica particles to spin-on-glass (SOG) film compositions, citing col. 2, lines 45-54. On the contrary, Hitachi merely states that such compositions were studied, with no positive results. Furthermore, the compositions were not specified, except to state that they did not contain any organic components, and so were not the same as either Hitachi's or Applicant's organic compositions. Hitachi then goes on to describe their invention, which contains neither silica particles nor inorganic components. Thus, contrary to teaching the addition of silica particles to film compositions, Hitachi strongly suggests that there is no benefit to the addition of such particles to such compositions.

The Examiner states that it would have been obvious to employ basic conditions to catalyze the compositions of Hitachi. Whether or not this is true, the compositions of Hitachi fails to teach or suggest Applicant's claimed invention.

The Examiner also states that it would have been obvious to employ the Hitachi component (e) 3-glycidyloxypropyltrimethoxysilane, to modify surface properties or improve adhesion. However, Hitachi was concerned with storage stability and thick-layer formation, not adhesion. Indeed, Hitachi fails to even mention adhesion as a consideration. Thus, there is no guidance provided to the skilled artisan to employ 3-glycidyloxypropyltrimethoxysilane, to improve adhesion.

Finally, the Examiner states that it would have been obvious to employ fine particles of silica to make an 'ash resistant coating'. However, as already pointed out, there is no basis in the reference for this contention.

Since Hitachi fails to teach or suggest that silica particles must be added to the reaction mixture under basic conditions, it is urged that the claims are patentable over the reference, and that the rejection is in error and should be withdrawn.

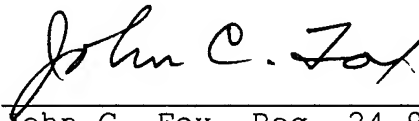
Claims 1, 2 and 4-11 stand finally rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Nissan (EP 0 611 812 A2).

Unlike Hitachi, Nissan does clearly teach the formation of silica particles *in situ* as the hydrolyzed product of tetraalkoxysilane. Like Hitachi, however, Nissan does not teach or suggest the addition of silica particles to a reaction mixture.

Accordingly, it is urged that the rejected claims are not obvious in view of, and are therefore patentable over the cited reference, and that the rejection is in error and should be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of record, allow all of the pending claims, and find the application to be in condition for allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John C. Fox". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

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